Amendments to the Specification:

Please amend line 9 on page 9 first full paragraph as follows:

The cooperation of the active elements 40 and the connection media 42 define a plurality of communication paths between the devices 44-50 that are communicatively coupled to the active network 36. For example, a route 60 defines a communication path from device 44 to device 50. If there is a disruption 61 along the route 60 inhibiting communication of the data packets from the device 44 to the device 50, for example, if one more or active elements are at capacity or have become disabled or there is a disruption in the connection media joining the active elements along the route 60, a new route, illustrated as route 62, can be used. Route 62 may be dynamically generated or previously defined as a possible communication path, to ensure the communication between the device 44 and the device 50.

Please amend line 18 on page 15 last paragraph continuing on to page 16 as follows:

As shown ~~in FIG. 13~~, the active element 204 is communicatively coupled with the active element 214 via radio frequency transmissions 220, and the active element 206 is communicatively coupled with the active element 216 via radio frequency transmissions 222. In this manner, multiple vehicles may be linked via the active elements disposed within the active networks. Linking the active networks in this manner effectively expands the active networks of both vehicles, and hence the number of communication paths available to link devices in any of the linked vehicles. An automobile may be communicatively coupled to a trailer that it is towing. Two vehicles traveling together can be linked in order to exchange messages, vehicle functional data, entertainment programming, etc. For example, passengers in linked vehicles may jointly play electronic games or watch video programming. A vehicle disabled because of the failure of one or more devices may be rendered operable in tandem with a rescue vehicle to which it is linked by using the functioning devices in the rescue vehicle to provide the function to both. Similarly, if a device becomes isolated in a vehicle because of a failure of a portion of the active network, communication to the device may be reestablished using a linked surrogate vehicle to provide communication paths to the isolated device.